

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Linda Sánchez (D-CA) reintroduced the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) Reimbursement Protection Act, which she previously introduced in the 110th and 111th Congresses. The Act helps states and localities obtain reimbursement for some of the costs of incarcerating individuals who are here illegally and are either charged with or convicted of a felony or two or more misdemeanors.

“Securing our nation's borders is the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal government and the costs of housing criminal aliens awaiting trial shouldn't fall on states and counties,” said Rep. Linda Sánchez. **“At a time when the State of California and the cities in my district are facing budgetary crises, I call on my colleagues to support this effort to increase SCAAP funding so that my localities do not have to release suspects early or cut other crime prevention activities.”**

In 2003, the Department of Justice limited SCAAP payments, stipulating that states and localities could only be reimbursed for the cost of incarcerating a criminal alien if the individual is both charged with and convicted of a crime in the same year, but overlooked costs associated with holding a suspect before the actual conviction. This has made many of the costs associated with pre-trial detention ineligible for reimbursement.

Rep. Sánchez continued, **“In my home state of California, SCAAP reimbursements have fallen by almost half since the changes in 2003.□ This makes it more difficult for police departments to protect the public and fight crime.”**

The legislation is a result of conversations between Rep. Sánchez, law enforcement agencies, and their officers on how to fix this problem. Without this legislation, state and local budgets would be overwhelmed by costs that should be the federal government's responsibility.